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Political Expert: First 100 Hours In Congress Was Not Historic

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Andrew Smith, director of the University of New Hampshire Survey Center and research associate professor of political science, is available to discuss the significance of the legislative effort by the U.S. House in its first 100 hours. He can be reached at **603-862-2226** or Andrew.smith@unh.edu.

According to Smith, the 100-hour legislative effort by the new congress is not historic. "It's a pretty standard tactic for new Congresses, recently seen in 1994 with the GOP takeover and in 1932 when the Democrats took over after years of GOP control," Smith says.

Of the legislation passed by the U.S. House, Smith says the ethics bill is the most interesting, and the minimum wage bill is most likely to become law, in some form. However, the legislation passed in the first 100 hours portends little about the success of future legislative actions and initiatives of the new Congress.

"We're already seeing some major fissures in the House leadership, particularly between the old bulls like John Dingell and Nancy Pelosi. These are likely to increase in the future. The Democratic majority is not large enough that any truly radical or historical legislation is likely to make it through," he says.